

In The Claims:

Cancel all claims of record and substitute new claims 12 to 16 as follows:

Claim 1 (cancelled): An adjustable bimini bracket, for use in connection with a boat having a railing tubular member on either side of the boat, and a bimini having a top, a plurality of tie-downs, and a plurality of strut tubular members, each strut tubular member having at least one terminus, the bimini bracket comprising:

- (a) a left side plate and a right side plate, the left and right side plates being generally parallel and spaced apart, the left and right side plates extending between opposite first and second ends;
- (b) a transverse plate extending between the left and right side plates intermediate the first and second ends, so that the bimini bracket will slidingly engage the tubular member between the left and right side plates, and adjacent the transverse plate;
- (c) a biasing means for biasing the first ends of the left and right side plates toward one another, the biasing means being hand operated, so that the biasing means will be hand tightened, clamping the tubular member between the left and right side plates, thereby preventing the bimini bracket from sliding on the tubular member, and the biasing means will be hand loosened, allowing the bimini bracket to slide on the tubular member; and
- (d) a fastening means adjacent the second ends of the left and right side plates, for fastening the terminus of one of the strut tubular members to the bimini bracket, and for fastening one of the tie-downs to the bimini bracket.

Claim 2 (cancelled): The bimini bracket of claim 1, wherein:

- (a) the left and right side plates each have a first hole therethrough adjacent the first end, the first holes being collinear; and
- (b) the biasing means includes a first bolt and a hand knob engaging the first holes.

Claim 3 (cancelled): The bimini bracket of claim 2, wherein:

- (a) the left and right side plates each have a second hole therethrough adjacent the second end, the second holes being collinear; and
- (b) the fastening means includes a second bolt and a nut engaging the second holes.

Claim 4 (cancelled): The bimini bracket of claim 3, wherein one of the first holes includes a first shaped recess therein to receive a similarly shaped member on the head of the first bolt, so as to resist turning of the first bolt while turning the hand knob.

Claim 5 (cancelled): The bimini bracket of claim 4, wherein one of the second holes includes a second shaped recess therein to receive a similarly shaped member on the head of the second bolt, so as to resist turning of the second bolt while turning the nut.

Claim 6 (cancelled): An adjustable bimini bracket, for use in connection with a boat having a railing tubular member on either side of the boat, and a bimini having a top, a plurality of tie-downs, and a plurality of strut tubular members, each strut tubular member having at least one terminus, the bimini bracket comprising:

- (a) a left side plate and a right side plate, the left and right side plates being generally parallel and spaced apart, the left and right side plates extending between opposite first and second ends, the left and right side plates extending between opposite front and rear edges, the left and right side plates each having a first hole therethrough adjacent the first end, the first holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having a second hole therethrough adjacent the second end, the second holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having an inner surface and an outer surface;
 - (b) a transverse plate extending between the left and right side plates intermediate the first and second ends, the transverse plate extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge;
 - (c) a left ridge on the left plate inner surface, and a right ridge on the right plate inner surface, the left and right ridges being disposed intermediate the transverse plate and the first end, the left and right ridges extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge, so that the bimini bracket will slidably engage the tubular member between the left and right side plates, and between the transverse plate and the left and right ridges;
 - (d) a first bolt and a hand knob engaging the first holes, so that the hand knob will be hand tightened, clamping the tubular member between the left and right side plates, thereby preventing the bimini bracket from sliding on the tubular member, and the hand knob will be hand loosened, allowing the bimini bracket to slide on the tubular member;
- and

(e) a second bolt and a nut engaging the second holes, for pivotal fastening of the terminus of one of the strut tubular members to the bimini bracket, and for fastening one of the tie-downs to the bimini bracket.

Claim 7 (cancelled): The bimini bracket of claim 6, further comprising a first boss juxtaposed with one of the first holes, the first boss having a first hexagonal recess therein aligned with the first hole to receive the head of the first bolt, so as to resist turning of the first bolt while turning the hand knob.

Claim 8 (cancelled): The bimini bracket of claim 7, further comprising a second boss juxtaposed with one of the second holes, the second boss having a second hexagonal recess therein aligned with the second hole to receive the head of the second bolt, so as to resist turning of the second bolt while turning the nut.

Claim 9 (cancelled): The bimini bracket of claim 8, wherein the left and right side plates taper upward in thickness from the first end to the ridges, to reinforce the side plates adjacent the first end.

Claim 10 (cancelled): The bimini bracket of claim 9, further comprising a plurality of ribs on the outer surfaces of the left and right side plates, the ribs extending between the front and rear edges, to reinforce the side plates.

Claim 11 (cancelled): An adjustable bimini bracket, for use in connection with a boat having a railing tubular member on either side of the boat, and a bimini having a top, a plurality of tie-downs, and a plurality of strut tubular members, each strut tubular member having at least one terminus, the bimini bracket comprising:

- (a) a left side plate and a right side plate, the left and right side plates being generally parallel and spaced apart, the left and right side plates extending between opposite first and second ends, the left and right side plates extending between opposite front and rear edges, the left and right side plates each having a first hole therethrough adjacent the first end, the first holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having a second hole therethrough adjacent the second end, the second holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having an inner surface and an outer surface;
- (b) a transverse plate extending between the left and right side plates intermediate the first and second ends, the transverse plate extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge;
- (c) a left ridge on the left plate inner surface, and a right ridge on the right plate inner surface, the left and right ridges being disposed intermediate the transverse plate and the first end, the left and right side plates tapering upward in thickness from the first end to the ridges, to reinforce the side plates adjacent the first end, the left and right ridges extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge, so that the bimini bracket will slidingly engage the tubular member between the left and right side plates, and between the transverse plate and the left and right ridges;
- (d) a first bolt and a hand knob engaging the first holes, so that the hand knob will be hand tightened, clamping the tubular member between the left and right side plates,

thereby preventing the bimini bracket from sliding on the tubular member, and the hand knob will be hand loosened, allowing the bimini bracket to slide on the tubular member;

(e) a second bolt and a nut engaging the second holes, for pivotal fastening of the terminus of one of the strut tubular members to the bimini bracket, and for fastening one of the tie-downs to the bimini bracket;

(f) a first boss juxtaposed with one of the first holes, the first boss having a first hexagonal recess therein aligned with the first hole to receive the head of the first bolt, so as to resist turning of the first bolt while turning the hand knob;

(g) a second boss juxtaposed with one of the second holes, the second boss having a second hexagonal recess therein aligned with the second hole to receive the head of the second bolt, so as to resist turning of the second bolt while turning the nut; and

(h) a plurality of ribs on the outer surfaces of the left and right side plates, the ribs extending between the front and rear edges, to reinforce the side plates.

--Claim 12 (new): An adjustable bimini bracket, for use in connection with a boat having a railing tubular member on either side of the boat, and a bimini having a top, a plurality of tie-downs, and a plurality of strut tubular members, each strut tubular member having at least one terminus, the bimini bracket comprising:

(a) a left side plate and a right side plate, the left and right side plates being generally parallel and spaced apart, the left and right side plates extending between opposite first and second ends, the left and right side plates extending between opposite front and rear edges, the left and right side plates each having a first hole therethrough adjacent the first end, the first holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having a second hole

therethrough adjacent the second end, the second holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having an inner surface and an outer surface;

(b) a transverse plate extending between the left and right side plates intermediate the first and second ends, the transverse plate extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge;

(c) a left ridge on the left plate inner surface, and a right ridge on the right plate inner surface, the left and right ridges being disposed intermediate the transverse plate and the first end, the left and right ridges extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge, for allowing the bimini bracket to slidingly engage the tubular member between the left and right side plates, and between the transverse plate and the left and right ridges;

(d) a first bolt and a hand knob engaging the first holes, for allowing the tubular member to be clamped between the left and right side plates when the hand knob is hand tightened, thereby preventing the bimini bracket from sliding on the tubular member, and for allowing the bimini bracket to slide on the tubular member when the hand knob is hand loosened;

(e) a second bolt and a nut engaging the second holes, for pivotal fastening of the terminus of one of the strut tubular members to the bimini bracket, and for fastening one of the tie-downs to the bimini bracket; and

(f) a first boss juxtaposed with one of the first holes, the first boss having a first recess therein aligned with the first hole to receive the head of the first bolt, so as to resist turning of the first bolt while turning the hand knob.

Claim 13 (new): The bimini bracket of claim 12, further comprising a second boss juxtaposed with one of the second holes, the second boss having a second recess therein aligned with the second hole to receive the head of the second bolt, so as to resist turning of the second bolt while turning the nut.

Claim 14 (new): The bimini bracket of claim 13, wherein the left and right side plates taper upward in thickness from the first end to the ridges, to reinforce the side plates adjacent the first end.

Claim 15 (new): The bimini bracket of claim 14, further comprising a plurality of ribs on the outer surfaces of the left and right side plates, the ribs extending between the front and rear edges, to reinforce the side plates.

Claim 16 (new): An adjustable bimini bracket, for use in connection with a boat having a railing tubular member on either side of the boat, and a bimini having a top, a plurality of tie-downs, and a plurality of strut tubular members, each strut tubular member having at least one terminus, the bimini bracket comprising:

(a) a left side plate and a right side plate, the left and right side plates being generally parallel and spaced apart, the left and right side plates extending between opposite first and second ends, the left and right side plates extending between opposite front and rear edges, the left and right side plates each having a first hole therethrough adjacent the first end, the first holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having a second hole

therethrough adjacent the second end, the second holes being collinear, the left and right side plates each having an inner surface and an outer surface;

(b) a transverse plate extending between the left and right side plates intermediate the first and second ends, the transverse plate extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge;

(c) a left ridge on the left plate inner surface, and a right ridge on the right plate inner surface, the left and right ridges being disposed intermediate the transverse plate and the first end, the left and right side plates tapering upward in thickness from the first end to the ridges, to reinforce the side plates adjacent the first end, the left and right ridges extending from adjacent the front edge to adjacent the rear edge, for allowing the bimini bracket to slidingly engage the tubular member between the left and right side plates, and between the transverse plate and the left and right ridges;

(d) a first bolt and a hand knob engaging the first holes, for allowing the tubular member to be clamped between the left and right side plates when the hand knob is hand tightened, thereby preventing the bimini bracket from sliding on the tubular member, and for allowing the bimini bracket to slide on the tubular member when the hand knob is hand loosened;

(e) a second bolt and a nut engaging the second holes, for pivotal fastening of the terminus of one of the strut tubular members to the bimini bracket, and for fastening one of the tie-downs to the bimini bracket;

(f) a first boss juxtaposed with one of the first holes, the first boss having a first hexagonal recess therein aligned with the first hole to receive the head of the first bolt, so as to resist turning of the first bolt while turning the hand knob;

- (g) a second boss juxtaposed with one of the second holes, the second boss having a second hexagonal recess therein aligned with the second hole to receive the head of the second bolt, so as to resist turning of the second bolt while turning the nut; and
- (h) a plurality of ribs on the outer surfaces of the left and right side plates, the ribs extending between the front and rear edges, to reinforce the side plates.--